



# **Milecastle Primary School**

## **Educational Visits Policy**

**Reviewed November 2016**



## **MILECASTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL VISITS POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This policy applies to all staff in school who organise and participate in outdoor learning, offsite visits and learning outside the classroom.

Educational Visits are an important part of the school curriculum. They provide first-hand experience, valuable stimuli and opportunities to work in a different environment. Educational visits are undertaken with the highest possible regard to Health and Safety regulations and offsite visits are planned with reference to the LA policy for Educational Visits and OEAP National Guidance.

### **AIMS**

1. To provide a stimulus which supports classroom work.
2. To provide experiences in a variety of environments.
3. To raise the children's awareness of the possibilities of their environment.
4. To develop individual potential, to support spiritual, social and emotional development and to improve learning skills.

### **CATEGORIES OF OFFSITE VISITS**

#### **CATEGORY 1**

Routine non-complex low risk visits - visits to the local church, local shops, museums, galleries. Headteacher approval required.

#### **CATEGORY 2**

May require more enhanced planning due to the presence of a specific risk. Headteacher approval required.

#### **CATEGORY 3**

Outdoor and adventurous activities, residentials and visits abroad. Governing Body approval required.

### **PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **1. Approval of visits**

The headteacher (as E.V.C - Educational Visits Co-ordinator) must approve all school visits whatever the length. The visit leader (usually the class teacher) will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that the head has all necessary details including:

- i. the aims of the visit
- ii. where the visit is to, including any places to be visited en route and activities to be undertaken
- iii. the date of the visit and time of departure from and return to school
- iv. the names of pupils involved and their classes
- v. the names of staff involved and any other adults accompanying the visit
- vi. the transport to be used
- vii. the cost per pupil.

Teachers must submit an online visit application using 'Evolve' to seek approval for the proposed visit **at least 2 weeks before the visit**. Uploaded to this will be a draft letter to parents, any Risk Assessments and a detailed itinerary.

Before giving final authorisation for the visit, the head must be satisfied that the visit leader has made the proper preparations and that all adults involved in the visit, both teacher and non-teacher, have sufficient experience and ability to accept the responsibility and also have the necessary DBS clearance and checks.

The headteacher must approve the application.

## **2. Preparation for the visit**

Every event or incident clearly cannot be planned for and teachers need to use professional judgement in the circumstances. The visit leader must, however, ensure the proper supervision of pupils and take all reasonable precautions to avoid exposing them to dangers.

Sufficient time must be allowed to organise all aspects of the visit. Where a visit is to a new and unfamiliar place a preliminary visit must be made to enable the teacher to familiarise himself/herself with the site taking into account the following points:-

- i. the length of the journey should be calculated as well as the time required for visits to buildings or carrying out the planned activities;
- ii. any potential hazards should be noted so that adequate provision can be made for the safety of the pupils. This will involve a risk assessment being undertaken;
- iii. toilet provision, catering facilities, picnic areas and the availability of a telephone should be noted;
- iv. rendezvous areas, if required, should be identified;
- v. hours of opening of any places visited, admission charges and special arrangements for parties should be investigated;
- vi. contact should be made with any Education Officers on site.

Appendix 1 at the end of this policy is a checklist which will support the preparation of a visit.

Following the preliminary visit, the visit leader should determine the detailed itinerary for the whole visit, plan routes, arrange to book transport and admission to sites, calculate the cost of the visit including transport charges and admission fees and ensure that there is adequate insurance cover. Admin staff can be asked to book coaches providing a coach booking form is completed and asked to inform the school kitchen of the visit (10 school days notice required). If the visit is an outdoor one, a contingency plan should be made in case of bad weather.

A list of participants in the visit should accompany the party and another retained in school. A summary list of emergency contacts should be left with the head or admin officer. The visit leader should take the consent forms with him/her.

### **Residential Visits**

These must be planned with the headteacher.

### **3. Level of supervision**

Please note that these are starting points and ratios are determined by the nature of the activity and assessment of risk.

KS1 1:6    KS2 1:10

Ratios for Early Years may be different with more adults accompanying any offsite visit.

Levels of supervision for specific visits must be discussed with the head.

Each adult will have a list of children for whom he/she is responsible. Children will know which adult is responsible for them at all times.

### **4. Contact person at school**

A named contact person is designated at school. This will normally be the headteacher [deputy headteacher] and/or admin officer. Any communication between the group and the school must be via this contact person.

## 5. Parental communication and consent

A parent sending a child to school has the right to assume that the child will be on school premises unless he/she is informed to the contrary. In the case of brief visits in the immediate locality of the school it is sufficient to inform parents in a general letter at the beginning of the academic year that such visits will periodically take place. For any activity further afield, parents must be given full written details in advance including:

- the aims and objectives of the visit.
- the length of the visit.
- the place and time of departure and return, particularly if the visit extends beyond normal school hours. If the party is due to return to school after normal school hours, then parents should be required to accept responsibility for their child's safe return home and, if necessary given the age of the child, undertake to arrange to collect him/her from school. Parents should indicate their acceptance of this responsibility on the parental consent form.
- whether public transport or private transport is to be used. If by public transport, include details of any routes to be followed including to/from bus stops.
- the activities to be undertaken.
- details of the membership of the group.
- the names of the accompanying adults and the nominated group leader.
- details of the cost of the visit, arrangements for collecting money and rules regarding spending money.
- the type of clothing and footwear to be worn.
- whether food or drink is to be brought and any connected rules.

Information should also be obtained from parents regarding any medical condition from which the child might suffer which may cause difficulty during the visit, details of medication taken and an emergency contact and telephone number.

Although consent is not required for offsite visits during the school day it is school policy that parents should provide written consent for their child's participation in a visit. The parental consent forms should be taken with the party as they may be needed by hospitals as proof of authority should the need arise for a child to receive medical treatment.

If written consent has been requested no child will be allowed to participate in a visit without the consent form being completed. It should be noted that this consent signature does not absolve the teachers or other adults in the party of responsibility.

## **6. Finance**

Clear guidance should be given to pupils on the amount of spending money they may bring. When the excursion has been costed parents will be invited to contribute a set amount. No child will be excluded from a visit for financial reasons.

Some visits may be subsidised from Pupil Premium Funding or a donation for the 'Friends of Milecastle'. This should be discussed in advance with the headteacher.

## **7. Clothing**

Instructions regarding suitable clothing and equipment will clearly depend on the nature of the visit. In many cases normal school clothing will be suitable especially since it will make identification of pupils less difficult. However, when school uniform is not required, pupils must be given clear instructions regarding appropriate clothing and footwear.

In circumstances where instructions have been ignored and the pupil is considered to be dressed in a manner which is inappropriate for the activity and may constitute a safety hazard, the pupil should be excluded from the visit.

## **8. During the visit**

If a visit is to be successful high standards of discipline and behaviour must be maintained. Pupils should be given clear guidance so they know what is expected of them and must have unambiguous instructions about procedures. Instructions should cover suitable clothing and equipment, food and drink, spending money, conduct and behaviour throughout the visit. The party should only separate into groups if each group is being supervised by a member of staff. Ideally, this should be a teacher.

Staff should check toilets before children enter and a member of staff or volunteer should always be either in the toilet or just outside. Staff should check that all children have exited the toilets before the party moves on.

## **9. Visit leader**

The identity of the visit leader must be known to all members - pupils, teachers and other adult supervisors. All adults should be briefed in advance as to personal responsibilities and as to emergency procedures.

All adults accompanying the party must be aware of special factors pertaining to a particular pupil e.g. a medical condition. Inhalers/medication should be taken and used in line with school policy.

The visit leader should carry with them :

- a list of members of the party and consent forms
- money for the telephone or a mobile 'phone.

The leader should ensure that the school visit backpack is taken. This contains:

- high vis jackets
- paper towels and tissues
- plastic bags
- an emergency procedures checklist
- an accident/incident form
- a first aid kit.

In addition, a bucket should be taken for use on the coach.

Roll calls should be taken at key points e.g. when leaving a building, after toilet trips or boarding transport. Group leaders should make similar checks.

A procedure should be established for a rendezvous point in case anyone should become separated from the main party. Should the visit leader need to attend to an emergency, then a clearly identified deputy must assume overall responsibility.

The visit leader should inform the admin officer when the party leaves and returns to school.

## **10. Transport**

Responsible behaviour should be insisted upon while travelling. Coaches will be the most likely form of transport used and account should be taken of the following:

- Only coaches equipped with seat belts for each traveller should be used and these should be used.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher and not the coach driver to maintain discipline.
- Pupils should board and alight from the bus in an orderly manner and remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- The visit leader should note the position of the emergency exit and ensure adequate supervision of children seated in that area.
- For longer visits, toilet and refreshment stops should be planned in advance so that pupils do not have excessively long travelling periods.

- Children liable to be travel sick should sit near the front of the bus.
- Pupils should not eat or drink while travelling.
- Each child should have his/her own seat and seat belt.

When a party is travelling on foot, there should be an adult at the front and at the rear of the party. Particular caution should be used when crossing roads.

## **11. Use of volunteers**

School may use volunteers as a way of increasing the adult to pupil ratio if required. The visit leader should discuss this with the headteacher at the planning stage. The visit leader must:

- be confident in the volunteer's ability to be helpful and to undertake supervision tasks under his/her direction.
- fully brief the volunteer before the visit and ensure they have seen any risk assessments.
- arrange for admin staff to carry out a 'List 99' check of the volunteer before the visit.
- remind volunteers of the no-smoking and no use of mobile 'phones (including no photos) rules when accompanying a school party.
- have overall responsibility for all adult volunteers.

## **12 Inclusion**

In line with the Equalities Act 2010 all children should have the opportunity to participate in educational visits. Activities should be available and accessible to all, irrespective of special educational or medical needs or protected characteristics. When a visit or activity is being planned, all reasonably practicable measures must be taken to include all young people. Every reasonable effort should be made to find a venue and activities that are both suitable and accessible and that enable the whole group to participate fully and be actively involved. Any concerns should be discussed with the headteacher/EVC.

## **13. Conclusion of visit**

Following a visit within school time, teachers should dismiss children as normal. After a visit which returns after school time, the visit leader should ensure that all children have been collected by parents.

## **14. Monitoring and Evaluating**

The visit leader should complete the online evaluation within 10 days following the visit which will be used to inform the planning of future visits.



**PLANNING AN EDUCATIONAL VISIT  
VISIT LEADER CHECKLIST**

ACTION	✓ Date completed
1. Check outline proposals with headteacher.	
2. Arrange preliminary visit to venue. Check that it is a suitable venue.	
3. Complete coach booking form and pass to admin staff.	
3. Complete Risk Assessment and check if any special insurance arrangements need to be made.	
4. Draw up detailed itinerary.	
6. Calculate cost of visit and produce draft letter for parents. Check letter with head before issue.	
7. Complete educational visit approval forms using 'Evolve' online system. Attach all information.	
8. Confirm booking of transport/admission to sites if required.	
9. Ensure all staff who may be affected by visit (teachers, support staff, kitchen, admin staff) are informed.	
10. Issue letter to parents with appropriate information and obtain written consent for pupil participation if appropriate.	
11. Arrange supervision including any checks of volunteers accompanying party.	
12. Determine emergency procedures and contact telephone numbers.	
13. Brief pupils regarding clothing, behaviour etc.	
14. Brief all adult supervisors regarding responsibilities.	
15. Ensure a list of pupils attending with an emergency contact for out of school hours is carried by all adults in the party and a copy left in school.	
16. Ensure all adults have seen any risk assessments.	
17. Ensure that all required equipment and supplies (e.g. first aid) are taken on the visit. The contents of the school rucksack from the medical room should be checked before taking out of school.	
18. Inform HT of departure and return, alerting her of any incidents which may need to be followed up.	
19. Return all equipment.	
20. Complete evaluation on 'Evolve' within 10 days of visit.	



### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As outlined in OEAP National Guidance.

**THE EMPLOYER**, i.e. the Governing Body in the case of Foundation Trust schools, retains overall responsibility for health, safety and welfare.

The governing body has delegated approval of Category 1 and 2 visits to the headteacher. Final approval from the Governing Body is required for Category 3 visits (residentials, visits abroad and outdoor and adventurous activities).

### HEADTEACHER

It is expected that headteachers will comply with their roles and responsibilities outlined in the national guidelines provided by the OEAP and ensure:

- staff are appropriately trained, experienced and competent in relation to their roles
- that an EVC is appointed
- that a Visit Leader is appointed for each visit and has been approved by EVAS, where they are leading adventurous activities
- the school has in place a suitable local Educational Visits Policy and procedures for their school which clarifies:
  - whether final approval for all visits rests with the head teacher or whether certain visits require approval from the governing body.
  - whether 'EVOLVE' is used for all visit categories.
  - the assignment of a risk category (1-3) to all visits undertaken by the school
  - their local procedures for carrying out assessments, planning, approval and monitoring processes for visits and adventurous activities arranged by the school.
  - emergency response and support arrangements.
  - sufficient time is given for assessment, planning and approval processes ahead of visits.
  - visit risks are adequately assessed.
- Sensible control measures, are identified and implemented including ensuring:
  - provision of adequate levels of supervision
  - control measures/precautions that are proportionate to the risk
  - communication of arrangements to all parties

- school based emergency support arrangements are in place.
- They authorise Category 3 visits in 'Evolve' at least 4 weeks prior to the visit.
- They approve category 1 and 2 visits. Blanket approval arrangements outlined in the schools own Educational Visits Policy are normally sufficient for category 1 visits.
- Accident recording, investigation and reporting arrangements are in place
- Checking and monitoring arrangements to confirm that visit assessment and planning arrangements are appropriate. This is normally undertaken by the EVC.
- The mechanism for reviewing the adequacy of visit assessment and planning processes, visit and learning outcomes and considers lessons learnt.

It is expected that the role of the EVC will be fulfilled by a member of staff with sufficient authority and credibility to challenge and influence the safe planning around educational visits. When selecting an EVC, headteachers should therefore ideally appoint a member of the school's senior management team with previous practical experience in leading and managing a range of visits similar to those typically run by the school. The person appointed should attend EVC training, to be considered competent.

In order to gain a greater understanding of the assessment and planning processes headteachers are also encouraged to attend EVC training.

### **Educational Visit Co-ordinators (EVC)**

It is expected that an EVC will be appointed by the headteacher where schools plan, organise and deliver educational visits and off site activities.

It is expected that EVCs will comply with their roles and responsibilities outlined by the OEAP <http://oeapng.info/evc/>

EVC must attend EVC training arranged through EVAS, re-validated every three years.

The EVC will:

- support the headteacher develop and review the Schools Local Educational Visits Policy and generic risk assessment for visits in category 1.
- liaise with the Visit Leader to ensure assessment and planning processes for category 3 visits are completed in a sufficiently timely manner to enable the visit to be authorised by the headteacher in Evolve at least 4 weeks prior to the visit. Visit details will automatically be notified to EVAS for validation of the

assessment and planning processes.

- obtain final approval from the headteacher for all visits in categories 1, 2 and 3.
- obtain approval from EVAS for each Visit Leader appointed to lead Adventurous Activities using 'Evolve'.
- monitor the planning, assessment and approval processes for all visits to confirm compliance with this Policy and the School's Educational Visits Policy
- ensure that this policy, Outdoor Education Advice Panel guidance on visit standards etc. and the Educational Visits Policy, procedures and assessments produced by the school are available to and followed by all parties involved in planning educational visits.
- keep appropriate records of visits and make these available when requested for inspection.
- deliver induction briefings on the School's Educational Visits Policy, procedures and generic risk assessment for new staff who may be involved in school visits.
- consider whether training is required for assistant/visit leaders and liaise with EVAS to arrange.
- be the principal contact with and seek advice where appropriate from EVAS for visits and adventurous activities.

### **Visit Leader**

The Visit Leader has overall responsibility for the assessment, planning, supervision, conduct and safety of young people on the visit or adventurous activity.

It is expected that the Visit Leader will comply with their roles and responsibilities outlined in the OEAP national guidelines and will:

- where necessary undertake pre-visits
- undertake a risk assessment identifying the main risks and identify as part of a thorough planning process how these will be controlled
- inform parents in advance of the nature of the visit and gain their consent and details of medical requirements
- continually assess risks during the visit and encourage young people to take an active role in this process.

## Appendix 3



### Quick Guide to EVC and Visit Leader requirements

<b>The EVC should:</b>
Ensure all visits meet their employer's guidance.
Support the headteacher and governors with approval and other decisions.
Assess competence of prospective visit leaders.
Ensure risk assessments meet requirements.
Organise training and induction.
Ensure parents are informed and give consent when required
Organise emergency arrangements.
Keep records of visits, accidents and incident reports.
Review systems and monitor practice.

<b>A Visit Leader must:</b>
Be approved.
Be competent.
Be accountable.
Follow employer's guidance.
Plan and prepare- including risk assessment.
Define roles and responsibilities of other staff and volunteers.
Be aware of safeguarding issues and procedures.
Review and evaluate.
Have a Plan B.
Be prepared to stop the visit if necessary.